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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 3687
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 2921
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0979
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 3652
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0518
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RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 4077
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RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 8226
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 003077

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XOXO
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[11.](#) Rabin Assassination Anniversary

[12.](#) Mideast

Key stories in the media:

Ha'aretz reported that on Tuesday a Palestinian was killed in an air

force attack on a vehicle in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. The newspaper quoted the IDF as saying that the targeted vehicle was carrying a terrorist from the Popular Resistance Committees. Leading media reported that on Tuesday eight Qassam rockets and eight mortar shells were fired from the Gaza Strip. A house in Sderot sustained a direct hit. Israel Radio reported on a drive-by shooting this afternoon at the entrance of the West Bank settlement of Ariel, in which an Israeli was wounded.

Major Israeli media reported that Defense Minister Ehud Barak plans to approve a list of sanctions against Gaza following an escalation of Qassam rocket fire. The Jerusalem Post quoted officials as saying that Israel will begin to cut the supply of gasoline to Gaza in the coming days. Leading with the same issue, Ha'aretz said that the security forces plan to cut power in Beit Hanun in the northern Gaza Strip for two hour intervals, during the evening or the night.

Major media (lead story in Makor Rishon-Hatzofe) quoted Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu as saying on Tuesday during a Likud photo-op on the Tower of David in Jerusalem's old city, that the "Olmert government is leading to a Hamas-led Jerusalem." Likud MKs have vowed to fight against any territorial concessions within or around Jerusalem.

All media (banners in Yediot and Maariv) devoted considerable space to the 12th anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. Ha'aretz quoted President Shimon Peres as saying on Tuesday that "Today, the path that Yitzhak Rabin paved for us is reemerging; the path of peace has not been lost." Israel Radio quoted Ehud Barak as saying that Israeli public institutions still harbor people who were part of the incitement that preceded the assassination.

Leading media reported that on Tuesday PM Ehud Olmert heard from British PM Gordon Brown that he and his government would seek further sanctions against Iran in the UN and the EU. Ha'aretz and Israel Radio reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin told Olmert in their meeting last week that Russia will not supply nuclear fuel to Iran. Olmert also met in London with Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Yediot reported that the IDF is asking the public to make use of quiet days to protect their homes against missile attacks -- preparing protected spaces, plastic sheets, and drinking water.

Yediot reported that while current Shin Bet head Avraham Diskin believes that the failure of the Annapolis meeting would increase terror, previous Shin Bet head and Knesset Member Ami Ayalon, holds a contrary opinion. The Jerusalem Post quoted PA negotiator Saeb Erekat as saying on Tuesday that the PA will not attend the Annapolis meeting unless an agreement is reached beforehand on all final status issues.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that Hamas announced on Tuesday that it uncovered a Shin Bet spy ring that was gathering information on abducted IDF soldier Gilad Shalit.

Leading media reported that in a speech at the National Defense University, President Bush described the deployment of a missile system in Europe as essential to counter the Iranian threat. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe quoted Defense Secretary Robert Gates as saying on Tuesday that US missiles in Poland will be positioned for defensive purposes only.

Ha'aretz reported that Vice PM Haim Ramon will ask PM Olmert for further funding to extend the West Bank separation barrier. Construction will soon be halted unless new funds are found.

Yediot and Maariv reported that on Tuesday Syrian President Bashar Assad ordered that citizenship be granted to the residents of the four Druze communities in the Golan. Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that Gen. Ali Habib, the commander of the Syrian Air Force, told his pilots to be prepared to counter any foreign aggression.

Makor Rishon-Hatzofe reported that in an interview with AFP, Hizbullah's foreign relations chief Nawaf Mussawi warned against the establishment of a US military base in Lebanon.

Ha'aretz quoted the Russian news agency Novosti as saying that Iran

has signed a deal with China to buy two squadrons of J-10 fighter planes that are based on Israeli technology.

Ha'aretz reported that on Tuesday the Military Advocate General petitioned the High Court of Justice to require the Winograd Commission to make good on its pledge to issue warnings to those who might be harmed by the committee's final report.

Leading media reported that State Attorney Eran Shendar, in agreement with Attorney General Menachem Mazuz, has decided not to prosecute PM Olmert in two affairs involving the purchase of properties -- in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The Jerusalem Post printed a Jewish Telegraphic Agency wire report quoting Turkish FM Ali Babacan as saying in an interview with the liberal Islamic newspaper Zaman that he had told American Jewish leaders that a genocide bill would strengthen the public perception in Turkey that "Armenian and Jewish lobbies unite forces against Turks."

Yediot reported that Israelis can now only find employment in Europe, since the US is "full" and will no longer admit high-tech workers.

I1. Rabin Assassination Anniversary:

Summary:

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized: "The demand to create a Jewish consensus before any decision on withdrawal has become a code for refusing to accept any concession, even if it is supported by a large democratic majority."

Conservative, Orthodox journalist Hanoch Daum wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot: "Since [the Rabin assassination] we yeshiva students have all become accustomed to the accusatory looks and the collective smear campaign. Some of us also felt a bit guilty.... something of this sense of guilt, something of the knowledge that I took part in the ongoing incitement, that I too was in [Jerusalem's] Zion Square [the scene of incitement by right-wing leaders before the assassination], still stings in my heart."

Peace Now Secretary-General Yariv Oppenheimer wrote in the popular, pluralist Ma'ariv: "The obsessive interest in Amir's life is turning the murderer into a legitimate figure, a local celeb."

Block Quotes:

I1. "Democracy or Hypocrisy"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (10/24): "A large majority of the Israeli public continues to support leaving the occupied territories in return for a peace agreement. From this point of view, [Yitzhak Rabin's assassin Yigal] Amir failed resoundingly. The minority that believes the territories must not be left under any circumstances has not grown, but it has become more extreme.... The demand to create a Jewish consensus before any decision on withdrawal has become a code for refusing to accept any concession, even if it is supported by a large democratic majority.... Amir decided to murder Rabin the moment the Oslo Accords were signed. He was not deterred, but rather imbued with faith in the justness of his cause. Generations of young people must be educated against this faith and cause. Even before he carried out the assassination Amir belonged to the camp that preferred the greater, occupying Land of Israel to the democratic Israel, although he understood that these are two conflicting

entities. Many still believe as he does. Education for democracy must encompass debate about Israel's control over the lives of Palestinians deprived of civil rights; it must relate to the fact that Israeli democracy suffers from an essential flaw. Without discussing these issues on the commemoration day of the assassination, the initiative will not be educational, but hypocritical."

II. "My Responsibility"

Conservative, Orthodox journalist Hanoch Daum wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist *Yediot Aharonot* (10/24): "The days were the stormy days of Oslo, and I was sent by the organizers of the demonstrations, together with my classmates from the yeshiva, to demonstrate in front of Rabin's home, to blow on whistles opposite the Prime Minister's Residence and to shout all kinds of yells there, including 'I don't want to be next,' and of course 'Rabin the traitor' and 'You don't have a mandate.' I regret those demonstrations. To a large degree, they were part of the atmosphere in which Yigal Amir grew. Part of a delegitimization campaign that was conducted incorrectly and without a sense of proportion against a person who was promoting a completely mistaken idea and who had mismanaged the battle against his opponents in the national camp by ostracizing them -- but who had done so in good faith..... Since [the assassination] we yeshiva students have all become accustomed to the accusatory looks and the collective smear campaign. Some of us also felt a bit guilty. We remembered the demonstrations, the defamations, the persecution that we were part of.... The years passed. The collective guilt passed from us to Ariel Zilber [a singer who recently participated in the creation of a movie calling for the early release of Amir] and his 'compatriots.' But something of this sense of guilt, something of the knowledge that I took part in the ongoing incitement, that I too was in [Jerusalem's] Zion Square [the scene of incitement by right-wing leaders before the assassination], still stings in my heart."

III. "The Yigal Amir Festival"

Peace Now Secretary-General Yariv Oppenheimer wrote in the popular, pluralist *Maariv* (10/24): "This year it seems that ... instead of stories and broadcasts about Rabin's actions and legacy, public debate focuses on the murderer, his wife, and his yet to be born child. Instead of marking 12 years since the prime minister's assassination, it looks as if Israeli society is marking the 12 years since the assassin was jailed.... The obsessive interest in Amir's life is turning the murderer into a legitimate figure, a local celeb.... Make no mistake. The media is not providing such approving coverage to Amir's fans and family to expose wild weeds in Israeli society or to prevent the next assassination. The real, principal motive behind every detail coming out of the Amir household only stems from the unrestrained chase for rating and public exposure.... As was to be expected, 12 years after that horrible night, memory fades, prime minister Rabin becomes no more than a distant figure in Israeli history, and the hot news is provided by an assassin who never stopped smiling."

12. Mideast:

Summary:

Liberal op-ed writer Uzi Benziman commented in the independent, left-leaning *Ha'aretz*: "The conflict is perceived as an ailment that is part of the scenery -- a troubling phenomenon we have to put up with. It is not given the status of a major problem that must be urgently resolved."

Block Quotes:

"The Time to Put Principles Aside"

Liberal op-ed writer Uzi Benziman commented in the independent, left-leaning *Ha'aretz* (10/24): "The personal fate of the prisoners and the missing [Israelis], and the horrendous hardship experienced by their families are only a random illustration to the suffering and injustice the conflict has caused to thousands of people on both

sides. When the suffering manifests itself in a single, individual case, the decision makers are overwhelmed by misgivings and ethical considerations. Why are these elements not expressed in their daily handling of the conflict? A hundred years of a chronic conflict, with many bloody outbursts, especially 40 years of violent confrontation, has dulled the Israeli public and its leaders to the human cost of the struggle with the Palestinians. The conflict is perceived as an ailment that is part of the scenery -- a troubling phenomenon we have to put up with. It is not given the status of a major problem that must be urgently resolved."

JONES